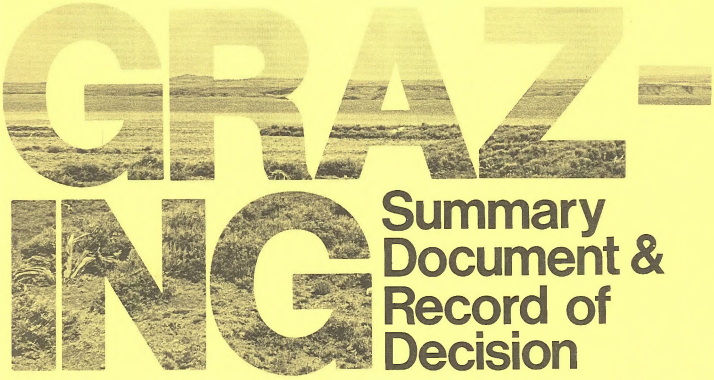
GRASS CREEK



GRAZING

Summary Document & Record of Decision

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
WORLAND DISTRICT, WYOMING
1983

GRASS CREEK

GRAZING

SUMMARY DOCUMENT AND RECORD OF DECISION

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DISTRICT MANAGER
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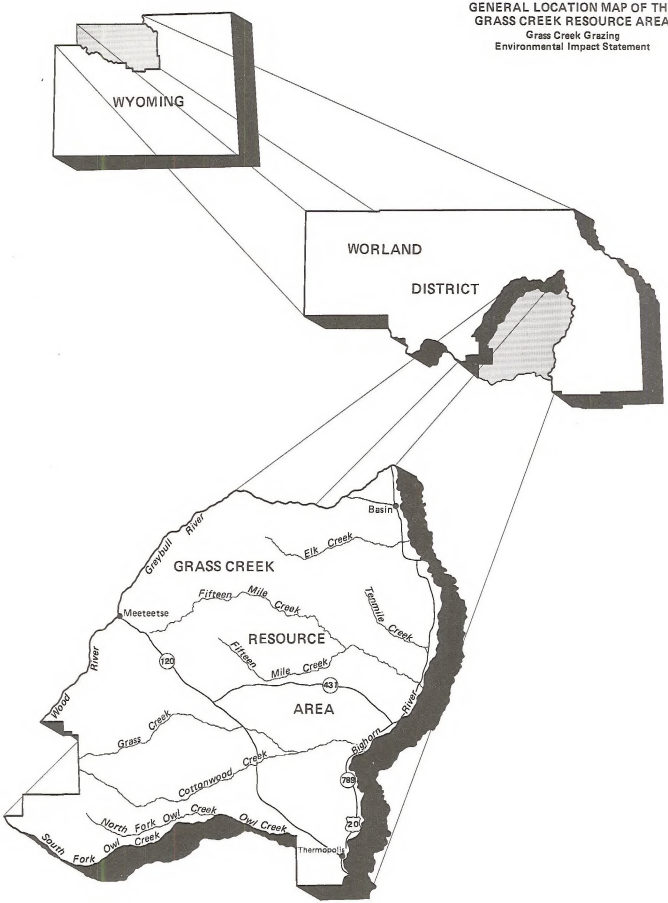
WORLAND DISTRICT

GENERAL LOCATION MAP OF THE
GRASS CREEK RESOURCE AREA
Grass Creek Grazing
Environmental Impact Statement



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INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE

This report summarizes rangeland management actions that will be taken on public lands in the Grass Creek Resource Area (GCRA) in portions of Hot Springs, Washakie, Big Horn, and Park Counties, Wyoming, and serves as the Public Record of Decision for the GCRA Grazing Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has determined that the actions are needed as part of a long-term program to restore public rangelands to satisfactory conditions and provide the full range of resource needs based on principles of multiple use and sustained yield.

These decisions follow completion of the grazing EIS in September 1982. The EIS described the consequences of five alternatives for grazing management on 965,000 acres of public lands. Alternatives selected were based on issues identified in the Management Framework Plan (MFP or land use plan), the EIS, public comments on the EIS, and user consultation.

BACKGROUND

The EIS area includes a total of 162 allotments involving 104 permittees. BLM presently authorizes 106,000 AUM's of forage for livestock on public lands and 21,000 AUMs are needed to support Wyoming Game and Fish Department Strategic Plan goals for wildlife. Thirteen hundred fifty wildlife AUMs are non-competitive with livestock grazing. Thirteen hundred eighty-four AUMs of forage will be required to support the wild horses in the Fifteenmile Wild Horse Area. Table 1 lists permittees and their grazing preference.

Existing public land ecological condition percentages in the EIS area are summarized as follows:

Excellent-Good	Fair	Poor	Unclassified*
27%	41%	14%	18%

*Primarily areas of rock and shale outcrop and forest areas.

Deer, antelope, and elk are the primary big game species occurring in the area with a small number of moose and big horn sheep in the higher elevations. Upland game bird species include: sage and blue grouse, chukars, Hungarian partridge, and morning dove. The EIS area also provides substantial habitat for waterfowl and numerous species of small mammals and non-game birds.

The EIS area contains several small trout and warm water fishery reservoirs and a few live streams. Hunting is the primary recreational use in the area.

No critical habitat was identified for threatened or endangered species.

Table 1
Grazing Preference

Operator	Active AUMs	Suspended
Orlando Aagard	316	184
Antlers Ranch	868	0
Arapahoe Padlock	221	0
Axtell Estate	230	0
Martin & Carol Bader	154	86
Baird & Sons	2956	961
Baird Cattle Co.	1826	420
Blu Jay Ranch, Inc.	856	1971
Charles & Ray Bower	134	266
James Brown	211	11
Nathan & Joyce Brown	1642	119
Duncan Buchanan	125	125
Campbell, Inc.	250	215
Richard Carter	2785	3815
Ben Coble	13	8
Royal Corley	107	86
Cottonwood Acres	203	0
D&LM, Inc.	151	49
C. O. Davis	561	384
Diamond Bar Ranch	1885	15
Albert Dooley	150	75
Ramul Dvarishkis	2043	966
The Four Eulers	400	140
Fred J. Feraud	547	183
John M. Feraud	1843	617
Roger Fernandez	409	557
C. H. Gardner, Inc.	208	692
Gilbreath Cattle Co.	1420	234
Charles Glade	38	12
Gould Ranch Co.	1036	63
Lloyd Groseclose	11	0
H. D. Ranch	1781	0
Jewel Hammond	40	0
Jerry Hart	218	157
Ken Harvey	127	148
Clyde Harvey	248	154
Victor J. Heinze	404	79
Herrin Ranch, Inc.	440	46
Hibbert Ranch Inc.	1885	255
High Island Ranch	2001	77
Hillberry Cattle Co.	1642	347
Dee Hillberry	1807	712
John R. Hogg	80	0
Hot Springs Land and Cattle	62	0
Hunt Oil Co.	2730	0

Operator	Grazing Preference Active AUMs	Suspended
IRMA Hotel	2273	1390
Jones Bros. Enterprize	1346	876
Leroy J. Jones	58	2
Delbert D. Jones	75	95
Myron Jones	249	251
Maxine and Gary V. Kellogg	1066	400
Arnold and Beatrice Kruger	26	0
Ollie Kukla	799	201
L U Sheep Co.	16,290	7144
Larsen Ranch Co.	1273	92
Edward and Katie Larsen	658	348
John F. Leroux	117	0
Ruth A. Kleinschmidt Est.	1462	678
Mackenzie and Vass	1347	173
Michael Markovsky	730	0
Betty J. Martinez	125	0
Jay C. Mathews	929	311
Mayland Brothers	1438	760
Morris McCarty	95	84
Arthur McCumber	109	47
William B. Murdoch	285	0
Lyle Neves	495	388
Melvin Neves	7 E/U	0
Owen Neves	509	412
Glenn E. Nielson	2136	3673
Owl Creek Cattle	1713	14
Stanley Pennoyer	549	56
Oliver Peterson	1223	602
Merle D. Pitz	2217	1227
Rankine Brothers, Inc.	3056	719
John H. Reed	169	56
Clifton Renner	1746	416
Everett Renner	429	189
Thomas Renner	427	211
Rhodes Ranch, Inc.	3341	44
Danny Rush	519	481
Duane Rush	40	0
Norman Sanford	2501	157
Tom Sanford, Inc.	1520	326
Don Schlaf	2664	1548
Don Schlewker	5	0
Walte G. Shaffer	14	36
Leonard Shumway	18	0
Jeffrey E. Sonensen	84	224
Harold B. Swing	35	21
T. J. Ranch, Inc.	2050	740
Leon and Amie Toyne	238	159
Triple S. Ranch	27	5

Operator	Grazing Preference Active AUMs	Suspended
Royce E. Turner	4	6
TV Land and Cattle	268	48
Jerry Van Norman	63	0
Landis Webber	1557	0
Weber Estate	105	60
Webster Ranch Co.	2711	1555
Lewis E. Wiley	25	30
Jim Wilson	861	369
Joe Yorgason	1662	190
ZE Ranch	2802	2592
Leonard and Carol Zierlein	541	250
Total	106,143	43,885

E/U - Exchange of Use

GENERAL RANGELAND MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

Allotments within the Grass Creek Resource Area fit into one of three resource management categories (Table 2) according to renewable resource, economic, and management criteria. The intensity of grazing management proposed is based on the level of management needed to meet the following management objectives:

1. Maintenance ("M") Category - To maintain or improve the existing resource conditions and productivity.

2. Improvement ("I") Category - To improve existing resource conditions and productivity to enhance multiple use.

3. Custodial ("C") Category - To manage lands in a custodial manner that will prevent deterioration of current resource conditions.

TABLE 2

ALLOTMENTS BY MANAGEMENT CATEGORY

Allotments in "M" Category

Number	Name
0515	Upper Gooseberry
0519	Middle Creek
0520	Red Creek
0523	Highway
0530	Grass Creek Basin
0532	Whiskey Gulch
0534	East Cottonwood
0535	West Cottonwood
0536	Heifer
0540	Bridges
0551	Coulee - Mill Iron
0552	Milk Creek
0553	Richmond
0564	Little Buffalo Basin
0569	Curtis
0572	Individual
0574	Coal Draw
0582	Mill Iron East
0584	Jones Flat
0586	South Hart
0587	Tyber Pasture
0593	Hamilton Rim
0594	Buffalo Basin
0595	Iron Creek
0599	Gooseberry
0600	Elk Creek
0601	Mormon Creek
0604	L.U. Winter
0613	Putney Flat
0616	Home
0617	Gloyd Ind.
0630	Iron Creek
0638	Rush Ind.
0643	Buchanan
0644	Tanner
0645	Coal Draw
0646	Back of Rim
0647	Steer
0650	South Gebo Common
0657	West Allotment
0661	Three Peaks Anchor
0663	Cow Pasture
0665	Nelson
0670	Upper Fifteenmile
0672	Mountain
0679	Horse Pasture
0680	Lake Creek
2501	Arapahoe Ranch
2511	Gould Ind.
2522	Kruger Sec. 15
2538	Jones Ind.
2540	Hot Springs Sec. 15
2551	Webster Sec. 15
2555	Lawler Sec. 15
2562	Meeteetse East
2563	Larsen Sec. 15
3035	Hunt Oil Ind.

TABLE 2

ALLOTMENTS BY MANAGEMENT CATEGORY
(Cont'd)

Allotments in "I" Category

*"C_1" Number	Name
0503	Cottonwood Common
0507	South Gooseberry
0508	North Gooseberry
0509	New Burlington
0510	Fernandez-Blujay
0516	Cottonwood
0522	Grass Creek
0524	Cottonwood
0525	Rock Creek
0526	Sand Springs
0529	Prospect Common
0531	Spring Gulch Ind.
0537	Padlock
0538	Coal Draw
0541	Three Peaks Ind.
0542	Rock Creek
0545	Grass Point
0556	Twenty-one Creek
0558	Buck Creek
0560	SFNF
0568	Basin
0573	Wagonhound
0575	Owl Creek
0579	Buffalo Creek
0596	Wagonhound
0605	Buffalo Basin
0606	Upper Range
0607	Lake Creek

**"C_2" Number	Name
0609	Owl Creek
0614	Rattlesnake
0615	Lime Ridge
0620	Prospect Ind.
0621	North Grass Creek
0622	South Highway
0626	Timber Creek
0627	Gooseberry
0628	Hole-in-the Ground
0633	Upper Pastures
0634	Lower Pastures
0637	Grass Creek
0639	Tatman Mtn. Common
0640	Snyder
0642	Red Canyon Ind.
0652	Fifteenmile
0662	Fifteenmile
0669	Allen Basin
0671	Tenmile
0678	South Grass Creek
0681	Spring Creek
1070	Fifteenmile
1071	South Sleeper
0208	Fernandez Sec. 15
2510	Gould Ind.
2526	Buffalo Basin Sec. 15
2537	Dosie Sec. 15
2539	Sanford Sec. 15

*"C_1" - Livestock grazing occurs during the critical growth period for key plant species and is considered the major management problem in these allotments.

**"C_2" - Current livestock grazing management practices are achieving "I" category management objectives.

TABLE 2

ALLOTMENTS BY MANAGEMENT CATEGORY
(Cont'd)

Allotments in "C" Category

*"C_1"

Number	Name
0063	Groseclose Ind.
0504	Hamilton Dome
0506	Harvey Common
0512	Coulter Group
0521	Cottonwood
0527	Blackstone
0533	Home Ranch
0539	Individual
0543	Cannady
0546	Highway
0548	D.L. and M Ind.
0554	Waugh Dome
0559	Fivemile
0561	Freudenthal Ind.
0566	Owl Creek
0567	Harvey Ind.
0576	Elk Creek
0577	South Basin
0578	North Basin
0580	Coal Draw
0588	Sandstone
0597	Owl Creek
0608	Vass Ind.
0610	South Owl Creek
0612	North Tatman
0619	Elk Creek
0623	North Highway
0636	Haynes
0641	Swing Ind.
0648	Shumway Ind.
0651	Fivemile
0653	Red Lane
0654	Ayers Ind.
0664	Alamo Creek

**"C_2"

Number	Name
0513	Dockery Hammond
0528	Sixmile
0544	Maller, Ind.
0549	Greybull Bend
0557	Ramul Ind.
0583	Owl Creek
0611	Neves Ind.
0618	McCarty Ind.
0629	Rankine
0631	East Tatman
0668	Dorsey Creek
0674	North Tatman
1065	YU Bench
1077	Getzfried Ind.

*"C_1" - Livestock grazing occurs during the critical growth period for key plant species and is considered the major management problem in these allotments.

**"C_2" - Current livestock grazing management practices are achieving "C" category management objectives.

THE RANGELAND MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

SELECTED ALTERNATIVE

The selected alternative is essentially the same as the Proposed Action (the BLM's Preferred Alternative) analyzed in the Grass Creek EIS.

This program:

1. Best meets the area's social, economic, and environmental demands.

2. Provides for basic resource protection, improvement, and development.

3. Best addresses issues and conflict identified in the MFP and EIS process.

4. Responds positively to public comment and user concern.

MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

The selected actions to achieve the management objectives are:

1. Monitor actual grazing use, trend in range conditions, forage utilization, and climate (precipitation and temperature) to determine and measure the amount and rate of progress;

2. Consult with all affected parties to convey data collected during monitoring; to develop and implement grazing management prescriptions which could include livestock use adjustments, grazing treatments, utilization levels, and proper seasons-of-use; and to plan and install livestock management facilities, and land treatments; and

3. Conduct grazing use supervision on all rangelands and take appropriate action on unauthorized use.

Monitoring

The monitoring program will consist of four basic study elements:

Actual Use - Keeping a record of numbers, class, and season of grazing use by livestock, wildlife, and wild horses.

Utilization - Collecting and recording data relating to the amount or percentage of annual production of forage consumed by grazing animals.

Climate - Collecting and recording precipitation, temperature, and other climatic data that directly affect annual forage production.

Trend - Establishing permanent vegetation studies (and photo records) that can be reread periodically to determine changes that are occurring over time.

Supplemental studies will include gathering information on plant phenology, range readiness, forage production, etc., as may be needed for special management considerations.

Short-term effectiveness of management actions will be measured through actual use, utilization and climatic data. Long-term effectiveness will be measured through trend data in addition to the other three elements.

Consultation with affected parties will be emphasized throughout monitoring. Monitoring will be of variable intensity with higher levels occurring in "I" category allotments than in "M" and "C". Livestock operators will be asked to assist BLM in developing objectives, in selecting key areas in allotments and in gathering data. The operators will be expected to supply actual livestock use data.

Grazing Treatments

The grazing formula for a given allotment will be based on the phenological development and physiological requirements of key plant species but will also consider livestock management needs. A key species is relatively or potentially abundant and serves as an indicator of changes occurring in the vegetation complex. More than one key species may be selected, however, one species may be important for watershed, one for wildlife forage, another for livestock forage, etc.

Selection and design of a grazing system will be done through consultation with affected parties and based on the following considerations:

1. Sequence and timing of grazing and rest periods needed (grazing formula) to achieve management objectives.

2. Improvement and development practices needed to initiate the system.

3. Livestock handling requirements and economic considerations of the operator.

4. Present ecological conditions of the allotment.

Almost every grazing allotment, because of vegetation diversity, climate, soils and topography and associated multiple uses, requires different management. Therefore, the design of a grazing system will vary for each allotment.

The following grazing treatments (singly or in various combinations) will be combined with scheduled grazing to form grazing systems that will be used in the Grass Creek Resource Area:

Treatment 1: Defer Until Range Readiness - Defer livestock grazing from early spring to mid spring (approximately to the development of the fourth leaf stage on key perennial cool season grasses). This treatment will allow the soil to become firm and plants to begin restoring root reserves prior to spring turnout.

Treatment 2: Graze for Animal Production - This treatment is intended to benefit livestock production. It may be of short duration or season long depending on the number of pastures involved.

Treatment 3: Defer to Improve Plant Vigor - Defer livestock grazing from early spring to late spring. This treatment will allow key species to reach the flowering stage and regain vigor prior to grazing.

Treatment 4: Defer for Seed Production - Defer livestock grazing from early spring through mid-summer. This treatment will allow key species to produce seed prior to grazing.

Treatment 5: Graze for Seed Planting - Livestock grazing will follow seed ripe on key species. Trampling of seeds into the ground by grazing livestock during seed shatter is a way to improve seeding.

Treatment 6: Rest for Seedling Establishment - Rest for seedling establishment at least one year following seed trampling. In deteriorated range situations, the rest should continue to flowering of key species the second season following seed trample to allow new seedlings to develop secondary roots prior to grazing. Riparian areas may require longer rest periods to allow shrubs and trees to re-establish.

Specific dates for each treatment will be determined on the basis of plant phenology for key species.

Implementation of Grazing Systems

"M" CATEGORY ALLOTMENTS - Existing management practices are achieving "M" category management objectives. Livestock numbers, class and seasons of grazing use will continue to be permitted as currently authorized.

Flexibility in livestock numbers and turnout and removal dates will be allowed. The extent of flexibility will be developed through consultation with the permittee or lessee and based on multiple use objectives. The deviation from the normal operation will be explicitly defined and will not allow grazing use over limits of active grazing preference. The prescribed flexibility will be documented and made part of the terms and conditions of the permit or lease.

"I" CATEGORY ALLOTMENTS - Detailed livestock grazing plans or Allotment Management Plans (AMPs) will be developed for "I" category allotments through consultation with permittees and lessees. A grazing system

designed to improve resource conditions and productivity will be developed and become an integral part of the plan. The grazing system will be initiated upon implementation of the plan.

Plan development will be done on a conflict based priority with allotments having the more serious conflicts with other uses being treated first. This prioritization would not preclude specific projects from being completed in allotments of lower priority if the need arose.

"C" CATEGORY ALLOTMENTS - The major problem in the C_1 allotment is that present grazing use begins or occurs during the critical growth period for key plant species.

There are no specific grazing systems prescribed for the C_1 allotments, except, grazing will be deferred each year until key species reach seed ripe to prevent deterioration of current resource conditions.

An alternative to season changes in the C_1 allotments will be to allow the operator to prepare a grazing system that will meet the "C" category management objectives. Such grazing system will require BLM approval. The system will assure that no grazing occurs prior to range readiness every year and that no grazing occurs prior to seed ripe on key species two years out of three. Grazing will not be allowed prior to seed ripe on key species until the grazing system is developed and all necessary facilities installed. Livestock numbers and class will continue to be permitted as currently authorized.

The existing management practices in "C_2" allotments are achieving "C" category management objectives. There will be no prescribed changes from current grazing practices. Livestock numbers class and seasons will continue to be permitted as currently authorized.

Flexibility in livestock numbers, turnout and removal dates will be developed through consultation with the permittee or lessee and based on multiple-use objectives. The deviation from the normal operation will be explicitly defined and will not allow grazing use over the established grazing preference level. The prescribed flexibility will be documented and made part of the terms and conditions of the permits or leases.

Range Improvements

Developments that are required to facilitate intensive grazing management and improve range conditions will be installed. These projects consist of fences, wells, springs, reservoirs, pipelines, catchments, troughs, tanks and cattleguards.

Plant treatments such as sagebrush spraying, prescribed burning, rotary brush cutting and blue grama ripping will be proposed to improve rangeland conditions and productivity. All practices will conform with the MFP recommendations and BLM standards.

Livestock facilities and land treatments for the "M" and "C" category allotments will be subject to BLM approval before operator installation.

The selection and location of projects in the "I" category allotments will be determined through consultation with the affected party. Specific projects or locations are not proposed at this time since consultation has not taken place. Proposed developments will be analyzed to assure cost effectiveness prior to approval.

Initial Stocking Levels Following This Summary Document

"M" and "C" Categories - Livestock grazing will continue to be permitted at the levels currently authorized.

"I" Category - Initial stocking levels will be established:

1. Through consultation with the affected parties.

2. Through existing data that is acceptable to the area manager; or

3. Where available information is not acceptable to the area manager, the initial stocking levels will be established at the grazing preference.

Subsequent Adjustments of Livestock Use Levels

"M" and "C" Categories - There will be no change in use level in the short term. A low intensity monitoring program will be conducted by BLM on all allotments. Where monitoring indicates there may be significant problems, the level of monitoring would be intensified. Use levels will be adjusted if necessary after consultation with the affected parties. Where significant resource conflicts exist due to livestock grazing on "C_1" category rangelands livestock grazing could be excluded.

"I" Category - Livestock use and other consumptive use will be adjusted where necessary to meet multiple use management objectives after the estimated grazing capacity is established. The estimated grazing capacity will be based on monitoring and consultation with the affected parties.

Environmental Assessments

Subsequent environmental assessments will be prepared where impacts of management decisions are not sufficiently covered by the scope of the EIS.

Such environmental assessments will be prepared at the allotment management plan level, on types of actions, or on individual actions as the situation requires.

Grazing Use Supervision

The objective of use supervision is to ensure compliance with the grazing regulations and terms and conditions of permits, leases, and AMPs. Although there is overlap with the "actual use" portion of the monitoring program, the available work force will be concentrated in areas with the most severe resource problems or potential for problems. In the absence of known unauthorized use, allotments in the "improve category" will receive first priority, "custodial category" allotments second priority, and "maintain category" allotments third priority.

REASON FOR SELECTION

The selected alternative, when implemented, will result in improved range conditions on approximately 600,000 acres. This improvement will result in an increase of forage production. Increased vegetation production will reduce surface water runoff and thus reduce soil erosion and sediment yield. The program will effect a long-term improvement trend in stream and reservoir wetland/riparian zones. The additional waters will benefit water-dependent species. Big game carrying capacity will increase but not enough to reach Wyoming Game and Fish Department goals. A slight increase in hunting opportunities and visual quality will occur. As more and better quality forage becomes available, livestock and wildlife performance will improve.

The proposed action allows for overall improvement for many natural resources on a majority of the Grass Creek Area while causing least relative disruption to the livestock industry and historical grazing uses. It also complies with Federal regulations and is consistent with local plans and policies. It represents a reasonable balance of resource utilization and thus has been selected as the rangeland management program in the Grass Creek Resource Area.

MITIGATION

Since the selected alternative is based on multiple-use decisions which have already undergone conflict resolution, no further mitigation measures were indicated.

ALTERNATIVES

Alternative 1 (No Change)

The current livestock grazing management would be continued. Grazing systems on existing allotments would remain. Present livestock management facilities would be maintained at the present rate, but new facilities would not be installed. Grazing permits would be issued at present levels of grazing preference (106,000 AUMs). No specific forage allocation would be made for wildlife or wild horse.

The No Change Alternative was rejected because it would not meet BLM's long-term objectives for rangeland management. It would not increase usable forage production and plant cover or improve rangeland condition. Vegetation would decline, and deteriorated riparian zones would continue to decline. Soil conditions would not improve and would cause little change in the acreage of decreased soil productivity. Ground cover would generally decrease, and soil movement and erosion would increase. Soil compaction would increase thus reducing water infiltration rates and water retention in the soils. Average sediment yield would increase. Wildlife habitat quality and quantity would continue to decrease, and population levels would decline.

The No Change Alternative would adversely impact wild horse use areas by not providing forage for wild horses. Declining rangeland condition and lowered productivity would harm the health of wild horse herds.

Alternative 2 (No Action - No Livestock Grazing)

All authorized grazing on Federal lands would be eliminated as permits expire (approximately 1989) except trailing use. Only those range improvements that benefit other uses would be maintained. No new improvements for livestock grazing would be installed.

This alternative was not selected because it would not meet all management objectives and would not fulfill BLM's mandate for multiple use management. The alternative would cause a decrease in total income and disrupt traditional grazing operations on public lands, but would provide major benefits to most natural resources.

Alternative 3 (Optimize Livestock Grazing)

All available forage would be allocated to livestock on a sustained yield basis. All wild horses would be removed. All range improvements and plant treatments that would benefit livestock grazing would be implemented except as constrained by land use plan recommendations other than those intended to protect wildlife.

The optimize livestock grazing alternative was rejected because it would not meet the BLM's long-term multiple use management objectives. This alternative would generally improve the forage production, vegetation condition, and soil productivity, but would negatively impact wetlands, wildlife habitats, and wild horses. The greatest negative impacts would be suffered by sage grouse, antelope, and mule deer in sagebrush treatment areas. The wild horses would all be eliminated.

Alternative 4 (Manage for Other Grazing Uses)

Other grazing uses would be given preference over livestock grazing. Wild horse numbers would be limited to land use plan recommended numbers. Conflicts between livestock and other grazing use would be eliminated by restricting or excluding livestock.

The Manage for Other Grazing Uses Alternative was rejected because it would impose severe socioeconomic impacts on livestock operators in the EIS areas. All the other natural resources would be improved.

MONITORING

BLM will monitor the grazing management program to determine the effectiveness of grazing treatments and new rangeland developments and to determine whether allotment objectives are being met. Monitoring will provide information critical to managing and refining the program and provide the basis for making needed adjustments.

At a minimum, the monitoring studies will include actual yearly livestock use by pasture; wildlife and wild horse counts, forage utilization, trend in rangeland conditions, plant phenology, and precipitation. Actual use figures from livestock operators and BLM "counts" are the foundations for grazing management adjustments, since utilization, condition, trend and production have little value unless the grazing use is known. Each year specialists will study utilization of key forage plants using a weight related technique. Rangeland specialists will also evaluate condition and trend studies at the end of each grazing treatment cycle or on five year cycles to determine if conditions are improving, declining, or stable. Trend will be measured using plant frequency, cover, and production data and correlated to rangeland site condition. To measure yearly changes in rainfall, BLM and livestock operators will install rain guages in key locations throughout the Grass Creek Resource Area. Many were established in 1978. This information is important because the amount and timing of precipitation greatly affects vegetation production and plant vigor and thus influences trend data. Key forage plant phenology will be monitored in conjunction with precipitation to provide information for design of grazing treatments, and determination of critical growth periods and range readiness.

BLM will also design studies to ensure that the objectives of wildlife habitat and wild horse management programs are being met.

After the release of this summary document, the Grass Creek Resource Area will begin consultation to develop allotment specific objectives and monitoring procedures. The schedule is presented in Table 3.

The Grass Creek Resource Area Monitoring Plan cooperatively developed during 1982 will serve as a guide for monitoring.

When monitoring studies show that multiple use objectives are not being met, grazing treatments, livestock numbers, or season of use may need to be changed to reach the objective. In some instances, objectives may need to be reevaluated. In the short-term, utilization, climate, and actual use data will be used to evaluate needed adjustments.

TABLE 3

GCRA IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE

Year	Allotments		Year	Allotments	
	Number	Name		Number	Name
1983	0633	Upper Pasture	1987	0526	Sand Springs
	0634	Lower Pasture		0579	Buffalo Creek
	0642	Red Canyon		0614	Rattlesnake
	2539	Red Canyon		0615	Lime Ridge
	0678	South Grass Creek		1071	South Sleeper
	0596	Wagonhound		0681	Spring Creek
	0597	Willow Creek		0503	Cottonwood Common
	0542	Fall Creek		0590	Sand Draw
	0525	Black Draw		0537	Padlock
	0652	Fifteenmile		0538	Coal Draw
	0662	Fifteenmile		0556	Twenty-one Creek
	0669	Allen Basin		0558	Buck Creek
	1070	Fifteenmile	1988	0651	Fivemile
	0545	Grass Point		0663	Railroad Swamp
	0524	Cottonwood		0567	Harvey Ind.
	2510	Gould Ind.		0512	Coulter
	0639	Tatman Mountain		0576	Elk Creek
	0640	Snyder		0577	South Basin
	2537	Snyder		0578	North Basin
1984	0620	Prospect Creek		0619	Elk Creek
	0621	North Grass Creek		0588	Sandstone
	0622	South Highway		0504	Hamilton Dome
	0626	Timber Creek		0521	Cottonwood
	0509	New Burlington GP		0548	D.L. and M Ind.
	0510	Fernandez-Blu-Jay		0554	Waugh Dome
	2508	Fernandez-Blu-Jay		0559	Fivemile
	0522	Grass Creek		0561	Freudenthal Ind.
	0560	South Fork - North Fork		0566	Owl Creek
	0516	Blue Creek		0506	Harvey Common
1985	0508	North Gooseberry GP	1989	0641	Swing Ind.
	0671	Tenmile		0674	North Tatman
	0507	South Gooseberry Gp		0527	Blackstone
	0605	Buffalo Basin		0533	Home Ranch
	2526	Buffalo Basin		0539	Individual
	0606	Upper Range		0543	Cannady
	0607	Lake Creek		0546	Highway
	0609	Owl Creek		0580	Coal Draw
1986	0541	Three Peaks		0608	Vass Ind.
	0575	Owl Creek		0610	South Owl Creek
	0573	Wagonhound		0612	North Tatman
	0568	Basin		0623	North Highway
	0529	Prospect Common		0636	Haynes
	0531	Spring Gulch		0648	Shumway Ind.
	0637	Grass Creek		0653	Red Lane
	0627	Gooseberry		0654	Ayers Ind.
	0628	Hole-In-The-Ground		0664	Alamo Creek

GRAZING DECISIONS

The Grass Creek Resource Area will implement management actions starting with high priority allotments first. Area personnel will consult with permittees to develop specific management objectives for their respective grazing allotment(s). Management proposals aimed at achieving management objectives will be identified for each allotment.

Grazing decisions will be issued for every grazing allotment in the Grass Creek Resource Area based on the following criteria:

1. Those cases where adjustments can be successfully initiated and implemented through agreement with the permittee(s).

2. Those cases where the permittee(s) and BLM are unable to reach agreement and acceptable data are available; and

3. Those cases where data acceptable to the Manager are not available.

The proposed grazing decision for 1 and 2 above shall include as a minimum: (a) recognized grazing preference for the allotment, (b) initial stocking level (either currently authorized or adjusted), (c) resource values to be evaluated to determine progress in meeting those objectives, (d) monitoring studies that will be conducted, and (e) how information from the monitoring studies will be used to determine adjustments in stocking levels.

When data are not acceptable, as in 3 above, the first proposed decision will document the actions needed to secure acceptable data. Adjustments or changes based upon the data collected and evaluated as a result of the first decision are implemented by a second decision.

It is anticipated that decisions for 19 allotments may be issued by the end of the Fiscal Year 1983. These allotments are scheduled for monitoring in 1983 and are shown on Table 2. Plans and schedules for subsequent decisions will be documented in the Summary Document update which will be published and distributed annually. Individuals or groups interested in the consultation process should notify the Grass Creek Area Manager in which allotments they wish to be involved.

PROTESTS AND APPEALS

BLM will provide copies of specific allotment decisions on request. Proposed decisions may be protested within 15 days of their receipt by permittees, lessees, or other persons adversely affected in accordance with 43 CFR, Subpart 4160. Protests should be submitted to the Worland District Manager, Worland District Office, P.O. Box 119, Worland, WY 82401. Final decisions may also be appealed to the Worland District Manager within 30 days of their receipt.

RANGE IMPROVEMENT FUNDING

The proposed range improvements will be completed within a 20 year period if sufficient funds are appropriated. With anticipated overall reduction in government funds and manpower, the implementation period is uncertain. The current source of public funding for range improvements is one-half the grazing fees returned for this purpose. Range user contribution could assist in implementation of the plan.

BLM is in the process of transferring the responsibility for maintenance of most structural livestock facilities to the benefiting users to free more improvement funds for new projects. Therefore, cooperation of the range users will be essential to the success of this Rangeland Management Program.

These funds will be concentrated in the allotments with the greatest need for improvement which will result in the highest benefit/cost ratio. All new improvements will be analyzed by an environmental assessment prior to installation. All land or plant treatments will be covered by a plan to provide followup rest and subsequent management.

Benefit/cost evaluations will be conducted when specific improvements are proposed through the consultation and monitoring process. Subsequent Summary Document updates will discuss specific allotment/improvement project economic evaluations.

CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

Consultation and coordination have been an active part of the multiple use planning and EIS process in the Grass Creek Planning Area. BLM will continue consultation with affected livestock operators, land owners, Federal, state, and local agencies, and other organizations involved in rangeland management. Site-specific needs will be identified by allotment in consultation with affected parties, including monitoring studies, rangeland developments, grazing treatments, utilization levels, season-of-use, and livestock use adjustments.

SUMMARY DOCUMENT UPDATES

An update of this summary document will be published annually. The update will summarize decisions issued and decisions remaining to be issued, highlight activity plans scheduled for the following year, identify any significant changes in the program and reasons for those changes, and provide a summary of progress toward implementation of the rangeland management program.